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Department of Conservation
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THE RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

1980 AUG 22

Mr. Howard Chapman
Western Regional National
Park Service
450 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Chapman:

The State of California has reviewed the "Environmental Assessment, Comprehensive Management Plan, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Mineral King" dated July 1980 which was submitted to the Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse) within the Governor's Office. The review is in accordance with Part II of the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1965.

The review was coordinated with the Departments of Fish and Game, Forestry, Health Services, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Water Resources and the Air Resources and State Water Resources Control Boards.

We are concerned that the Environmental Assessment (EA) does not discuss the wildlife impacts associated with alteration of various man-made features as described in the Management Plan. For example, the document states that the Sawtooth Trail will be rerouted; however, no description is given of the proposed new alignment or its effects upon wildlife -- especially deer. Further, the plan discusses a new loop trail from Faculty Flat to various points of interest, again without a discussion of wildlife impacts. The alignment of trails is an item of great concern to us because the routing of increased human activity into sensitive wildlife habitats, such as deer fawning areas, will cause significant wildlife losses.

In addition to trails, we feel the discussion of wildlife impacts is inadequate as related to other planned project features such as an enlarged ranger station, expanded camp and parking facilities, and "additional space for display of artifacts". All of these features will be located in key deer habitat and will be detrimental to the herd. The EA would be improved significantly if the wildlife impacts of various developed facilities were compared with those at an alternative development site at a more westward location. We

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believe wildlife resources would be better protected if all major visitor facilities were moved westward, out of the "open" and more scenic Faculty Flat -- valley areas of Mineral King.

If you have questions regarding these comments or wish additional information, please address them to Roy Hines, Department of Fish and Game, 1234 East Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA 93710, or phone (209) 222-3761.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the assessment.

Sincerely,

James W Burns

James W. Burns
Assistant Secretary for Resources

cc: State Clearinghouse
Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

(SCH 80073158)

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